

EFFECTS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF BIAFRA'S SIT-AT-HOME ORDER ON THE ECONOMY OF SOUTH-EASTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of the indigenous people of Biafra's (IPOB) sit-at-home order on the economy of the southeast region of Nigeria. The separatist/secessionist party that wants to hold a referendum on the Igbo ethnic group's independence from Nigeria is currently imposing an order that has a significant impact on the southeast region of the country's trade, investment, internally generated income, works, and transportation. The study adopted Henry David Thoreau's 1849 essay on Resistance to Civil Government, "which was later renamed Essay on Civil Disobedience" after his seminal lectures were published in 1866. The work demonstrates that the indigenous people of Biafra (IPOB) are indirectly shooting themselves in the leg by stampeding and ruining their economic enterprises. The work gathers information from secondary sources such as newspapers, journals, magazines, websites, and pertinent resources. The report proposed and urged, but was not limited to, that the government establish discussion with (IPOB) through the leadership of the South-East States to reduce tensions.

Key Words: Biafra, Sit at Home, IPOB, Violence, Destruction, Economic Development

1.1 Introduction

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) sit-at-home protest in Southeast Nigeria is a result of the long-running effort to have Biafra reinstated as an independent state in the former Eastern region of Nigeria. Before being divided into various states in the south-east and south-south geopolitical segments, Biafra was an independent multi-ethnic republic that was mostly composed of the Igbo, the Ijaw, the Efik, and the Ibibio people (Mckenna, 2021). The continued fight for Biafra's independence, which Lieutenant Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu had earlier declared and which had sparked a war that lasted three years (1967–1970), prompted the formation of IPOB.

According to Campbell (2017), the conflict resulted in the deaths of 3.5 million people, many of whom were civilians who suffered from starvation and malnutrition, which hurt Nigeria's sociopolitical and economic progress. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and others made attempts to mediate the conflict, but they were unsuccessful. Many nations, including Gabon, Cote de Ivoire, Tanzania, and Zambia sent food and medicine to the Biafran agitators and soldiers via airlift, and France gave them weapons while the majority of nations continued to support Gowon's regime as the legitimate ruler of all of Nigeria (McKenna, 2021).

Odumegwu Ojukwu was able to escape, and the Biafran forces submitted to the Nigerian military on January 15, 1970, effectively ending the conflict. Despite assertions that the war ended with "No Victor, No Vanquished" and that a "3R" programme of "Reconciliation, Reconstruction, and Rehabilitation" was implemented to encourage peaceful coexistence, the Biafran region experienced the war as a "conquered,

oppressed, and subordinated people" with little to no stake in the discussion of important national issues. This led to the creation of other made-up catchphrases with unfavourable connotations, such as "NAIRA," which was supposed to stand for "Never Allow Igbos Rule Again."

In light of this, Nigeria's federalism and democracy are perceived as being unfavourable to the Igbo people due to the alleged proof of the Nigerian government's marginalisation of the Southeast region, which is predominantly inhabited by the Igbo people. This idea is what inspired the IPOB platform to start agitating for Biafra. Unfair resource allocation, extrajudicial killings, a sizable military presence, and political estrangement are just a few examples of how marginalisation presents itself. Mazi Nnamdi Kanu founded the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) to reclaim Biafra's independence in 2012 as a result (Allison, 2017; Owoeye, Ezeanya, and Obiegbunam, 2022).

Since 2012, the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) have engaged in many activities, but their most recent and distinctive tactic is the Sit-at order, which aims to express "peaceful protest" against the re-arrest of IPOB leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu by the Nigerian government (Federal) on June 29, 2021.

In addition to being a crucial strategy used by IPOB members and supporters, the Monday Sit-at-Home Order aims to commemorate significant moments in the history of the Biafra struggle, show support for the group's leader, and put pressure on the Nigerian government to release Nnamdi Kanu from what they believe to be his unlawful detention or prison (Omole, 2021; Owoeye, Ezeanya, and Obiegbunam, 2022).

The consequences and ramifications for numerous sectors in the southeast, including political and economic activities, have, nevertheless, generated a range of emotions and points of view.

Statement of the Problem

Since the Southeast area implemented the Sit-at-Home Order, there have been many discussions and disagreements over the implications, outcomes, and consequences on the sociopolitical and economic life of the region. The Southeast's sociopolitical and economic activities have suffered greatly as a result of the major differences that have developed between the organisation and the Federal Government of Nigeria. In terms of politics, the region has seen some changes in political activities as a result of IPOB's order to stay at home, including violations of citizens' civil and political rights, such as the freedom of movement and the right to life, a rush to register to vote and take part in elections, employment as Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) ad hoc staff, and the extra-deployment of security forces to the south-east region at the expense of other areas.

In terms of the economy, the sit-at-home strategy probably led to the closure of markets, especially on Mondays, and other businesses in the area, as well as the closure of banks every Monday and on other sit-at-home days, as well as the burning of retail establishments and commercial vehicles, among other indicators of the strategy's effects on Nigerian economic activities (Owoeye, Ezeanya, and Obiegbunam, 2022).

This study examines the effects of the sit-at-home directive on the Southeast region's economy in light of the surrounding situation. The objective of the study is to: examine whether the Sit-At-Home Order has affected "Trade and Investment" in the Southeast states or not; ascertain if the Sit-At-Home Order affected the Internally Generated Revenue of the South-East States; and investigate whether the Sit-At-Home Order affected the "Works and Transport Sectors" of the South-East States.

Scope and Limitations of the study

This study, which covers the months of August 2021 and September 2022 sporadically, focuses on the Sit-At-Home Order for the Southeast states' "Trade and Investment," "Internally Generated Revenue," and "Works and Transport" Sectors. Due to the following restrictions, including a shortage of materials and the impossibility of accessing some materials (information) due to security concerns, it

cannot be said that the issues explored in this research are comprehensive in terms of their scope and depth. However, the researcher was able to get around these restrictions by carefully looking at many information and data sources online.

Indigenous People of Biafra

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) are mostly viewed from two perspectives: separatist and terrorist. The Biafra Republic is what the IPOB aspires to establish, according to secessionists (Nwaiwu, 2016; Okafor, 2017; Ekpo and Agory, 2019; Okoye, 2021; Mark, Obi, and Chibuzor, 2022). The organization's goals are to support and promote the Igbo people's right to self-determination as a result of their alleged high level of marginalisation inside the Nigerian State. Political alienation, unequal resource distribution, extrajudicial killings, and a sizable military presence were mentioned as factors impacting the perception of marginalisation (Owoeye, Ezeanya, and Obiegbunam 2022).

As a result, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu founded the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in 2012 to reclaim Biafra's independence (Allison, 2017). The UK government branded IPOB a terrorist organisation in May 2022 and ordered it to be removed from its refugee programme. However, the Nigerian government designated the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as a terrorist organisation in 2017. This declaration about the IPOB being labelled as a terrorist organisation was made in the UK Government's revised Asylum Policy, which was made public by its Visa and Immigration (UKVI) Department in May 2022. He went on to point out that "IPOB is labelled as a terrorist organization and its paramilitary wing, the Eastern Security Network by the Nigerian government, (created in December 2020), for violation of human rights (Abolade, 2022, pp. 2-3).

Thus, the UK noted that IPOB has been linked to violence in the South-East precisely noting: the invasion of an All-Progressives Congress (APC) meeting in Enugu state where a party chieftain was killed; the Attack on an Imo Police Station where an officer was killed; killing of Anambra residents during enforcement of "sit-at-home" order; and killing of some policemen en route to Anambra International Airport, among others (Abolade, 2022; Radarr Africa, 2022). However, according to Mr. Russell Brooks, a spokesman for the US Embassy in Nigeria, and Mr. Jean-Claude Junker, President of the EU Commission, IPOB is not a terrorist group under US law or EU standards. According to Ndujihe (2017), the President of the EU Commission suggested that:

It is the people's right to agitate and make a request from their government; self-determination is a right enshrined in the United Nations Charter. The people of Biafra have every right to desire a referendum; they have been in this struggle for a long time; they have never killed or shot a bullet; instead, they have been the victims of attacks and murder.....The entire EU condemns the savage attack on IPOB members and leadership disguised as a military exercise (Operation Python Dance II). The Nigerian military has been told to adhere to democratic principles while dealing with civilians. The EU will not stand by and watch as the greatest economy in West Africa deviates from democracy.

The Nigerian government asserted that the United Kingdom did very little to address its assertion that Biafra Radio was broadcasting from its territory and that the majority of the funds received by IPOB from its diaspora supporters are sent through France. The aforementioned facts were probably considered before making this claim. As a result, Lai Mohammed, Minister of Information, quoted in Ndujihe (2017):

Let me tell you, the financial headquarters is in France, and it is incontrovertible that some people in the diaspora contribute money to IPOB.... This is a reality that we are aware of.

Again, there are a few complicated diplomatic topics that you should avoid. Who, for instance, is unaware that the IPOB internal radio is housed in London? We are aware of all the harm our diplomatic actions and approaches to the UK have caused, but they do not share our perspective. They see it as being about their right to free speech. What would you think if we had someone openly requesting weapons to come fight the UK in Nigeria? Do you think that is freedom of expression? This nation has a long history; what did the Irish Republican Army (IRA) do to earn its designation as a terrorist group? They were laying mines and battling the British soldiers.

The minister explained why the Federal Government designated IPOB, which was mentioned in Ndujihe (2017), as a terrorist organisation:

The acts and utterances of IPOB were acts and utterances of terrorists. For instance, Nnamdi Kanu, the IPOB leader was caught on tape saying that they want Biafra and not peacefully, but by force. He declared that if they do not get Biafra, Somalia will be a paradise with the kind of mayhem they will unleash on Nigeria. The group openly embraced arms and ammunition and the leader set up Biafra National Guard, and Biafra Secret Service and openly attacked army formations.

This study disregards the United States of America, the European Union, the African Union, and the United Nation's designation of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) as a terrorist organisation and instead views it as a secessionist or separatist organisation.

Sit-at-Home Order

The word "sit-at-home order," which is also known as "stay-at-home order," "safer-at-home order," and other variations, also connotes "movement control order" or "lockdown restrictions," among other things. was initially a command from a government authority that limits population movement as a mass quarantine approach for containing or containing a pandemic by ordering people to stay at home save for necessary chores or employment in necessary firms (Jones, 2020). Later, however, the term came to be used to describe both directions given by non-state actors and those issued by a government body that restricts travel.

One of the tactics used by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), which went into effect on August 9, 2021, was the Sit-at-Home Order. It was intended to highlight the necessity of a referendum on achieving self-determination, to honour those who lost their lives during the struggle, and, more importantly, the release of the leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu. Mazi Nnamdi Kanu was imprisoned by the Federal Government of Nigeria on June 29, 2021, which led to a stricter sit-at-home order (Owoeye, Ezeanya, and Obiegbunam, 2022).

The Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) issued the Sit-at-Home Order on July 30, 2021, mandating everyone in Biafra Land, notably in the South-East and South-States of Nigeria, to remain inside and abstain from leaving for any employment or business, whether in a public or private sector. Not only was business and commercial activity prohibited by the Order, but it was also enforced to ensure that it was followed. Following the IPOB's directive to stay at home on Monday, most people and motorists abandoned the major thoroughfares and streets in the five Southeast states (Okafor and Ede, 2021).

In the major cities of Nnewi, Onitsha, and Aba, business operations were suspended and markets, government buildings, and schools were completely shut down (Okafor and Ede, 2021).

Economy of South Eastern Nigeria

The four main pillars of any society's economy are trade, investments, manufacturing, and the delivery of services. The economic endeavours of every society are generally concentrated on the development of the various sectors through a robust labour force. Every community tends to encourage certain economic ventures that provide it with a competitive edge over rivals and boost money generation. The Southeast Geopolitical zone's primary economic sectors include business, industry, and agriculture. Despite being the smallest geographical area, the Southeast's rising industrialised economy and natural gas and oil reserves have a considerable economic impact on Nigeria.

2.2 Theoretical Review

The Southeast has seen several concerns regarding how the IPOB's order to stay home will affect the economy and the population's willingness to comply. The explanation for the general public's collaboration has been a source of concern. Two perspectives on this are noteworthy: the sympathetic viewpoint and the panic viewpoint. The public's acceptance and support of the Biafra route, following the sympathetic attitude, contributed to the effectiveness of the Sit-at-Home Order.

Differently, the Panic point of view contends that higher compliance and effectiveness with the Sit-at-Home Order in the various states as a result of IPOB's use of force in carrying out the order (Sahara Reporters, 2022; Mark, Obi, and Chibuzor, 2021). According to Umahi (2021) in Sahara Reporters (2021), "...some people in the south-east are afraid to come out." As a result, compliance is not an issue. It has to do with fear. Without regard to sympathies or Panic points of view, it is inferable that the sit-at-home order's effectiveness and obedience have been linked to many causes, the majority of which are:

- i. public sympathy for the secessionist cause,
- ii. consideration of personal safety and security in response to violent clashes between IPOB and security agents; and
- iii. IPOB's resort to coercive measures as a means of enforcement.

Sitting at home is thought to have negative effects on economic activity from an economic perspective. Which economy is most negatively impacted—the economy of the Southeast states alone, the economy of the entire country, or both—is the subject of debate. Umahi (2021) contends that the South East is the only region suffering from the negative effects of the sit-at-home movement, concluding that "we (in the south-east) are destroying our economy; the sit-at-home movement is not occurring in the South West, the North is not sitting at home, each time we sit at home, we lose." Similarly, to this, Okafor said, "It's truly a tremendous loss to us from the South East Zone, not just Anambra," as described in Atupulazi (2021).

According to Okafor, who was mentioned in Atupulazi (2021), reducing the procedure would be very challenging for us because a larger portion of our people are traders and we (the Southeast) have a comparative advantage in trade and commerce. As a result, I did everything within my power as a commissioner to get them out of their houses and away from their couches (Okafor, as cited in Atupulazi, 2021). I was unable to get inside their houses, though. In the same vein, Uduh, who is cited in Okafor and Ede (2021), bemoaned the fact that "Since people remained at home, the economy of Igboland suffered an expected setback." It follows logically that money would have been exchanged in Igboland as a result.

The effect on the economy is as follows. Uduh, who was mentioned in Okafor and Ede (2021), continued by asserting that IPOB has started to lose interest as a result of imposing sit-at-home orders on South Easterners. This is comparable to pressing the self-destruct button since the Southeast's population and economy will suffer. According to Okorie, who is quoted in Okafor and Ede (2021), "the economy

will turn into a ghost economy when you make Monday in the South-East a ghost one." Only IPOB, however, believes that the Southeast Zone of Nigeria is different from the rest of Nigeria, according to Okafor and Ede (2021). The federal government views the Southeast area as a part of the overall nation.

Therefore, whatever occurs in the zone affects the entirety of Nigeria. The South-East zone loses when it is placed entirely under lockdown. When the zone loses, Nigeria also loses. This order to stay at home has cost Nigeria as a nation billions of naira. Any form of movement is forbidden when a sit-at-home order is given. Since the federal government has offices in the Southeast region and receives internal funding from the South Eastern States, this also affects the federal government. This helps to explain why IPOB is disliked by the federal government and why they are seen as a "terrorist group" obstructing Nigeria's economic progress (Okafor and Ede, 2021).

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Sit-at-Home Order by IPOB and Trade and Investment in the South-East

The study "Separatist's Strategy: Appraising the IPOB Monday Sit-at-Home Order on Political Economy (Socio-Political and Economic Activities) of the South-East Region of Nigeria" was carried out in 2022 by Owoeye, Ezeanya, and Obiegbunam. Specifically, the study examined socio-political and economic activity in Southeast Nigeria, including market operations, transportation, the educational system, banks, and government organisations.

The researchers also used qualitative study design and content analysis methodologies and specifically referred to Tacoltt Parsons and David Easton's understanding of systems theory. The IPOB Monday sit-at-home protest hurts the sociopolitical and economic activity in the Southeast region of Nigeria, the study found among other things.

As a result, the paper made the case that the Federal Government of Nigeria urgently needs to put in place a suitable federal character system to ensure a fair and balanced distribution of resources throughout Nigeria's six (6) geographical zones. But more crucially, the Federal Government was urged to free IPOB leader Mazi Nnamdi Kanu from prison by using the Monday sit-at-home order as a political ploy. To resolve this issue quickly, the Nigerian government should make every effort. Although Owoeye, Ezeanya, and Obiegbunam (2022) tried to look into how the IPOB Monday Sit-at-Home Order affected Southeast Nigeria's political economy, they found that there was more attention paid to sociopolitical activities and theoretical economic submissions, with little to no statistical support for their claims or indication of the effects' direction.

2.3.2 Sit-At-Home Order and Internally Generated Revenue of the South-East States

An investigation into "The Ills of IPOB Sit-at-Home and its Implications on the Economy of Southeast Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria" was conducted like this by Mark, Obi, and Chibuzor in 2022. The primary objective of the study was to assess the impact of the Sit-at-Home Programme on economic development in the South East Region. The study's approach included the use of content analysis techniques and a qualitative research design. Its analytical underpinning was the relative deprivation theory. The paper claims that if action is not taken, the effects of the IPOB stay-at-home movement could eventually lead to the collapse of the economies of the affected states.

As a result, it implies, among other things, that discussion is a practical tool that will go a long way in softening the heart and mind of the presidency, yielding more positive consequences than the sit-at-home

plan. Mark, Obi, and Chibuzor (2022) made an effort to highlight the testimonies of some people taken from documents regarding how the implementation of the sit-at-home policy severely impacted their economic activities, but they were unable to delve into the specifics of trade and investment, Internally Generated Revenue, as well as works and transportation. The SBM Intelligence (2021) also used a "Survey Research Design" to look into "Categories of Workers Hardest Hit by IPOB's Sit-at-Home in South-East Nigeria. The study's objective was to identify the employees who suffered the most from the sit-at-home policy. The study polled 1,012 people in the South-East's five states. Less than half of the individuals who took part in the survey disagreed, while more than half admitted that the sit-at-home policy had a major negative influence on their productivity. Transporters, those in the hospitality industry, self-employed people, artisans, blue-collar formal sector workers, students, and white-collar formal sector workers, in particular, said the sit-at-home protest seriously impacted their productivity/economic activities, according to survey results broken down by occupation. A small minority of respondents said they were against the demonstration, although the majority of them agreed with it.

A divided nation was evident from the responses, with 464 respondents supporting the sit-at-home campaign more strongly than 312 respondents. A total of 233 respondents (23%) expressed no opinion. 25% oppose it, while 29% are adamantly opposed, representing the two opposing ends of the spectrum. It's noteworthy to notice that all five respondents who declined to answer this question elected to do so. To address the concerns of the IPOB Organisation and put an end to the sit-at-home action, the study recommended discussion. SBM Intelligence (2021) examined the effects of the sit-at-home trend on the economies of the southeastern states, but it did not provide evidence to support the allegations of the respondents regarding how it affected the study's primary focal areas. Instead, it merely relied on the respondents' statements.

2.3.3 Sit-At-Home Order and “Works and Transport Sectors” of the South-East States.

The sit-at-home order prevents transporters from performing their transportation duties. They can't generate any revenue. They are unable to feed their family. Everything has completely stopped. Since there won't be any transportation, people who would have travelled to the zone to engage in economic activities are unable to do so. People who plan to leave are unable to do so. One cannot go to the location to work if one has planned to do so. Nigeria doesn't split up until it does. The area still has federal government employees working there. These workers are prevented from reporting to work by sit-at-home orders.

The entire economy of these workers is affected. They can't generate any revenue. Banks cannot function. As a result, the affected states experienced a severe economic setback. This hurts the entire national economy. Regarding the self-employed, the private sector contributes to the economic growth of the region. The same is true for all of Nigeria. Not all independent contractors can operate while given orders to stay at home. In turn, the economy suffers. Along with those who live there, those who enter the zone to carry out their business operations also experience the same negative impacts. They are not allowed to do anything inside the zone.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The Civil Disobedience Theory was applied during the investigation. In a posthumous publication, Henry David Thoreau's 1849 essay "Resistance to Civil Government"—originally titled "Essay on Civil Disobedience"—was renamed. The civil disobedience school of thought was built on the work of this author. The phrase began to be often used in sermons and discussions regarding slavery and the Mexican

War after the publication of his landmark lectures in 1866.

In modern times, the term "civil disobedience" has acquired a negative connotation due to its vagueness and is now linked to the actions of criminals such as robbers, arsonists, drinkers who avoid paying their bills, campaign hecklers, radical students, anti-war demonstrators, and political assassins.

A Theory of Justice, published in 1971, contained John Rawls' definition of civil disobedience as "a public, nonviolent, conscientious yet political act contrary to law usually done to bring about change in the law or policies of the government." As a result, the act of actively refusing to obey a particular legislation, request, instruction, or directive made by the government (or any other authority) by a citizen is known as civil disobedience.

To qualify as "civil," an act of disobedience must be nonviolent. As a result, nonviolent resistance or nonviolent protests are occasionally mistaken for civil disobedience. Active civil disobedience is deliberately breaking laws, like organising a nonviolent blockade or trespassing on a property, however, violence has been known to happen.

Protesters frequently receive intensive training on how to react to arrest or violence because it is occasionally expected that authorities will assault or even beat them. According to Ronald Dworkin, there are three different categories of civil disobedience:

- Integrity-based civil disobedience: This happens when a citizen disobeys a rule, they believe to be immoral, as was the case with abolitionists who refused to comply with the laws governing runaway slaves by handing over escaped slaves to the authorities.
- Justice-based civil disobedience: This happens when a citizen violates the law to demand a right that has been denied to them, as when Black people demonstrated unlawfully during the civil rights struggle.
- Policy-based civil disobedience: This occurs when a person breaks the law to change a policy they believe is dangerously

The fundamental principle of the theory is that "Citizens often disobey to force home their demands while working to realise specific goals from their government." According to the theory, even though this civil disobedience technique is meant to be nonviolent and to force home the public's demands on the government, violence might occasionally result from either insufficient crowd control or from the answers or reactions of the government to the situation. It contends that the government typically responds by using "coercion" to coerce acquiescence to the contradiction of the citizen's requests because of the perceived effects of civil disobedience on administration, the economy, and socio-political order.

The theory advises that "dialogue" rather than "coercion" is the best way to resolve a problem in situations involving civil disobedience in any society since a people's directed resolve is likely not modified by "force," but rather through "negotiation."

The theory had influenced pioneers such as Susan B. Anthony of the American women's suffrage movement in the late 1800s, Saad Zaghloul of the 1919 Egyptian Revolution against British occupation that culminated in the 1910s, and Mahatma Gandhi of India in the 1920s in their protests for Indian independence against the British, as well as Martin Luther King Jr. and James Bevel's nonviolent demonstrations during the civil rights movement in the 1960s in the United States.

This theory of civil disobedience is therefore considered applicable in explaining the Indigenous People of Biafra's (IPOB) sit-at-home movement because it will help to (a) explain why the people chose to do so as an act of civil disobedience; (b) examine the effects of the sit-at-home movement on the economy of South-East Nigeria, specifically in terms of "trade and investment," "government's Internally Generated Revenue," as well as "

2.5 Gap in Literature

The effects of the IPOB Monday Sit-at-Home Order on the Political Economy of South-Eastern Nigeria were examined by Owoeye, Ezeanya, and Obiegbonam (2022). While SBM Intelligence (2021) looked into the "Categories of Workers Hardest Hit by IPOB's Sit-at-Home in South-East Nigeria," Mark, Obi, and Chibuzor (2022) looked into the "Ills of IPOB Sit-at-Home and its Implications on the Economy of Nigeria's South-East Geopolitical Zone." The purpose of the study is that none of them paid particular or in-depth attention to how the sit-at-home policy affected the economy in terms of trade and investment, internally generated revenue, and works and transportation, or provided verifiable statistical evidence that might have shown the general direction of the effects.

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Research Design

The researcher used a qualitative design in this study, which fits the description of the study under review.

3.1.2 Area and Population of Study

Nigeria has six geopolitical zones, the South East being one of them. There are five states in it: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, and Imo. The riverine Niger Delta, the flat North Central, the river-fed River Niger, the River Niger in the west, and the Cross River, in the south, all serve as the zone's boundaries. The Cross-Niger transition forests in the south and the Guinean forest-savanna mosaic in the dry north are the two ecoregions that make up this area. Culturally, the vast bulk of the zone is situated inside Igboland, the native cultural centre of the Igbo people, who make up the largest ethnic group in the southeastern United States with over 90% of the total population.

The Southeast, despite being the smallest geographical region, has a big economic impact on Nigeria because of its natural gas and oil reserves and growing industrialised economy. The region accounts for about 10% of the country's total population with 22 million individuals. Aba and Enugu are the tenth and fourteenth most populous cities worldwide, respectively, and the most populous cities in the South East of Nigeria. Other important cities in the southeast are Onitsha, Umuahia, Owerri, Nnewi, Awka, and Abakaliki in terms of population.

In the zone, which comprises 85 local governments and almost 20 million residents, there are. The zone contains ten or more commercial cities. In addition to agriculture, which is the main economic activity in the region, it is recognised as a centre for commerce and industry.

3.1.3 Sources of Data Collection

This relates to the source of the data that was used to analyse the study's work. The research exclusively used secondary instruments, although there are two ways to collect information (data), namely primary and secondary instruments. Information was gathered via public and private libraries, websites for newspapers and magazines, journal articles, textbooks, and online resources. The researcher was able to access information from both public and private libraries with the aid of the librarians. For instance, the Ebonyi State Library officer was crucial in the collection of books, journals, and magazines. Data sourcing also benefited from the assistance of the Ebonyi State Library's librarians. The study also used online resources in addition to newspaper content.

3.1.4 Method of Data Collection

Data collecting methods included reading, analysing, and extracting essential information from key sources like textbooks, journal publications, the internet, government publications, research reports,

newspapers, and magazines. The obtained data were compressed into useful, manageable sizes through deduction processes.

3.1.5 Reliability of Data

In its broadest sense, reliability is a scientific technique that aims to predict, analyse, prevent, and reduce failure throughout time. The data that were used in this study are regarded as reliable because they were acquired from official sources. Despite the possibility of some volatility, this analysis will show that the results are very consistent.

3.1.6 Validity of Data

This shows to what extent a research study measures what it intends to evaluate. the degree to which a hypothesis, assessment, or measurement is supported by evidence and accurately captures reality. Now that we've arrived at this stage, the researcher is ready to state that the research endeavour accomplished its intended goal. Bias has been greatly decreased as a result of content validity being applied to all of the data used in this investigation.

4.1 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION

The sit-at-home order, whose implementation started on August 9, 2021, is believed to have had a significant negative impact on the productivity and economic activity of South-Eastern Nigeria based on testimony, comments, observations, and intelligence reports from numerous sources. This submission is expressed as follows in many participant comments as well as in reports from regional intelligence organisations:

Table 1: Opinions on Effects of I POB's Sit-At-Home Enforcement on the Economy of South-Eastern Nigeria

| | Opinion Leader(s) | State | Occupation/ Status | Opinion Statement |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| 1 | Provision Shop Owner | Awka (Abakaliki Street) | Trading | Seven able-bodied men rushed into my shop that morning around 8a.m. and asked me to lock it up or face the consequences. I didn't resist. I had to obey them to save my life. We are all Biafra people in mind and spirit but I don't like this sit-at-home thing. How can you order people not to do business to feed their families? |
| 2 | Chief NzeOkorie | Enugu State | Socio-Political Analyst | The strategy of asking people to stay at home and to lock up their shops was taking a toll on the economy of the South-East. It is retarding the development of the region. When other parts of Nigeria are moving forward, we are forced to take steps backwards and by my understanding.... The economy of this region has been stagnated over time. |

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|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|----------|---|
| 3 | Odoh | Umuhuali, Ishielu L.G.A. Ebonyi State | Public Affairs Analyst | | The humanitarian and socio-economic activities of citizens of the state were badly affected by the last sit-at-home order. |
| 4 | Sir Uchenna Okafor | Anambra State | Former Commissioner for Trade & Commerce in Gov Willie Obiano's regime | | The sit-at-home strikes initiated by the Indigenous People of Biafra, IPOB, have been described as a development crippling the economy of the entire South East Region. ...most customers are now leaving for other places to source goods after failing to do business in the Southeast because of the constant sit-at-home strikes... once such people got what they wanted from Lagos or other places, they would not come back to Anambra again. 'Once they feel that Anambra is not safe, they will continue to go to where they think they can do their business without harassment. If you watch now, most of our traders and businessmen are moving to our neighbouring states like Delta. What it means is that revenue and IGR will now be shifted to Asaba and as a state and region, we are losing heavily to sit-at-home. |
| 5 | Senator EnyinayaAbaribe | Abia State | Senate Leader | Minority | Sit at home is killing the economy of the South-East as most businessmen are moving out of the region. Insecurity in the South- East is the biggest problem |
| 6 | ChimarokeNnamani | Enugu | The senator representing Enugu east | | IPOB's order has affected the economy and social life negatively in the southeast. |
| 7 | EzeKaluKaluOgbu, | Abia | Traditional Monarch, EnachiokenAbiriba | | the action would compound the economic woes of Ndigbo; locking down the entire Southeast every Monday would not be in the economic interest of the region already suffering protracted exclusion. |
| 8 | Dr. Emmanuel Chukwuma, | Enugu | Archbishop of Enugu Ecclesiastical Province Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion, | of | shutting down the South East region this time would destroy their economy and impoverish the Igbo |

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|----|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| 9 | Rt. BiereonwuLivinusOnuagha | Rev. Anambra State | Onitsha, Anambra State | Bishop, Methodist Church Nigeria, | Whoever is talking about losses that we are going to incur is a myopic individual. Supposing every Igbo man in Nigeria complies with that directive or instruction, Nigeria will just be on her knees. If Igbo men and women in Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Enugu, Port Harcourt, Kaduna, and all the states of the federation close their shops in compliance with that directive, Nigerians will feel more about what will happen. |
| 10 | Apostle Agomuo | Emmanuel | Abia State | Chairman of Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN, Abia State Chapter | The lockdown would only be to the economic and general disadvantage of Ndigbo. |
| 11 | Peter Ohagwa | | Imo State | The Director General, Bureau for Peace and Conflict Resolution, | The Sit-at-Home is causing more Hardship on the Southeast economy... the challenges people in the Southeast passed through during COVID-19, End Sars, and unknown gunmen killings were enough for IPOB to cancel such a decision, saying that insisting on ana-day-a-week sit-at-home would make matters worse. |
| 12 | Prof. Obasi Igwe | | Enugu State | Socio-Political Analyst | Given that the Sit-at-Home is affecting the economy of South-East badly, IPOB should start thinking strategically to increase chances of winning the battle....the sit-at-home call be rescinded because there are families that cannot eat any day they do not go to the market” and IPOB should not turn them into “saboteurs” for attempting to feed their children. |
| 13 | Pastor Asinobi | | Anambra | Patron of Drivers Welfare Association, DWA, Anambra state, | In as much as we the drivers are in support of any move to stop the marginalization of the Southeast zone and Ndigbo in particular, this fragrant abuse of and indiscriminate sit-at-home order does not augur well for the economic emancipation of the downtrodden |

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|----|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|-------|---|
| 14 | Mr. Emmanuel Eze | Anambra | Retired Servant | Civil | shutting down the southeastern region on Mondays is not the best decision now, saying that such action would have many adverse effects on the socio-economic welfare of the southeastern people; |
| 15 | Chris Okeke | Imo State | Banker | | The sit-at-home affects the Southeast economy negatively...since over 60% of what people of the region use goods either produced or imported from outside their region, the economic implication is that the people should gird their loins for self-economic independence. |
| 16 | Joseph Ozibo | Ebonyi State | Traditional Title Holder | | sit-at-home in the southeastern region is counterproductive and dysfunctional; Let IPOB leaders consider the socio-economic welfare of the people of the region |
| 17 | Onah Sunday | Ohaukwu, Ebonyi State | onetime chairman of the Nigerian Union of Teachers, NUT | | Sit-At-Home is destructive to the South-East Economy |
| 18 | NwaforKaluOmekannaya, | Imo State | An octogenarian and veteran of the Nigeria/Biafra war, | | “bad occurrences evoke bad reactions”; though the Sit-at-Home is affecting the South-East Economy badly, “We should blame whatever is currently happening, on the Nigerian Government. All the issues that led to the 30-month Nigeria/Biafra war, are still here with us, in greater intensity. Nothing has changed. |
| 19 | Chris Mocha | | Director of Information, DOI, Biafra Independence Movement (BIM- MASSOB). | of | Only the South-South and South East suffer the economic consequences of the order. The effect won't reach Abuja or Lagos. |

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|----|------------------------|-------------------|--|---|---|
| 20 | Hon. Nwobosi, Emmanuel | Anambra State | Senior Assistant Governor Willie Obiano Internally Generated Revenue, IGR, | Special to Willie on | I have not heard of the sit-at-home order but I must emphasize that Nnamdi Kanu is our brother and a human who deserve to be treated with dignity and human right. it is high time the Federal Government begins to take certain things seriously by listening to the yawning of the people. An idea cannot be killed by a gun or knife. An idea can only be killed or replaced by another better idea. |
| 21 | Titus Akpudo | Anambra | President of Anambra State Association of Town Unions, ASATU, | of State | The decision by IPOB is simply a call for Ndigbo to die of hunger.... Do they want all of us to sit at home and die of hunger before they know that we are in support of their agitation? |
| 22 | Dr. Josef Onoh, | Enugu State | Chairman, Enugu Capital Territory Development Authority (ECTDA) | Capital Territory Development Authority (ECTDA) | This is familiar propaganda that had enthroned hardship on the citizenry |
| 23 | Samuel Edeson | Enugu State | MASSOB's spokesman | | Sit-at-Home Destroys the Security and Economy of Ndigbo in Nigeria; the Igbo are harshly subjected to economic and political slavery in Nigeria and cannot continue to inflict more economic pains on themselves. Declaration of weekly sit-at-home orders and closing of major markets in Igbo land amounts to self economic destruction of the Igbo nation. |
| 24 | Mary Ndukwu, | | Administrative Secretary, Biafran Liberation Council | | the sit-at-home order as a declaration of war and hunger inflicting pain on the people |
| 25 | Angela Eze | Owerri, Imo State | Food Vendor | | The IPOB Monday sit-at-home strategy cum order has continued to pose a series of threats to the economic and commercial activities across all states in the Southeast region of Nigeria. |

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|----|------------------------|-------------------|-----|---|--|
| 26 | Agency Report | Owerri State | Imo | News Agency | Economic and social activities have halted in Imo over sit-at-home order by the proscribed Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) over fear of possible attacks”. |
| 27 | News Agency of Nigeria | Owerri, Imo State | | News Agency | Residents of the state have deserted markets and streets of the state capital for safety. |
| 28 | Okechukwu Nnaji | Owerri State | Imo | Commercial Motorist | the motorist experienced poor patronage due to a Sit-at-home order by the IPOB. |
| 29 | Okoye | Owerri State | Imo | Socio-Political Analyst | ...the prevailing situation of the shutdown of the South-East every Monday has continued to inflict collateral damage on the economy of the South-East States. The hoi polloi, who eke their daily livelihoods by hawking sachet beverages, vegetables, fruits and others the brunt of the weekly shutdown of the South-East. Indeed, when the action started in August, cities of the zone were ghost towns with streets, roads, avenues, closes, etc left desolate.....in Umuahia, Awka, Enugu, Abakaliki, Onitsha and Owerri, the situation persisted as many streets were empty even as shops and banks had their door shut penultimate Monday. Reports coming from Aba in Abia State indicate that despite the opening of some markets, traders were not seen in their shops. The same scenario played out last Monday. |
| 30 | Chief AbiaOnyike | Ebonyi State | | Former Commissioner for Information and Culture | The Sit-at-Home affects the economy of South-East Nigeria very badly, but pressure should be shifted from the militarization of the South-East Zone to the Leadership in Abuja. |

Source: <https://elenumoji.com/2021>; <https://www.legit.ng/2021>; Odili, E. (2021); Vanguard, August 25, 2021; Owoeye, Ezeanya and Obiegbunam (2022)

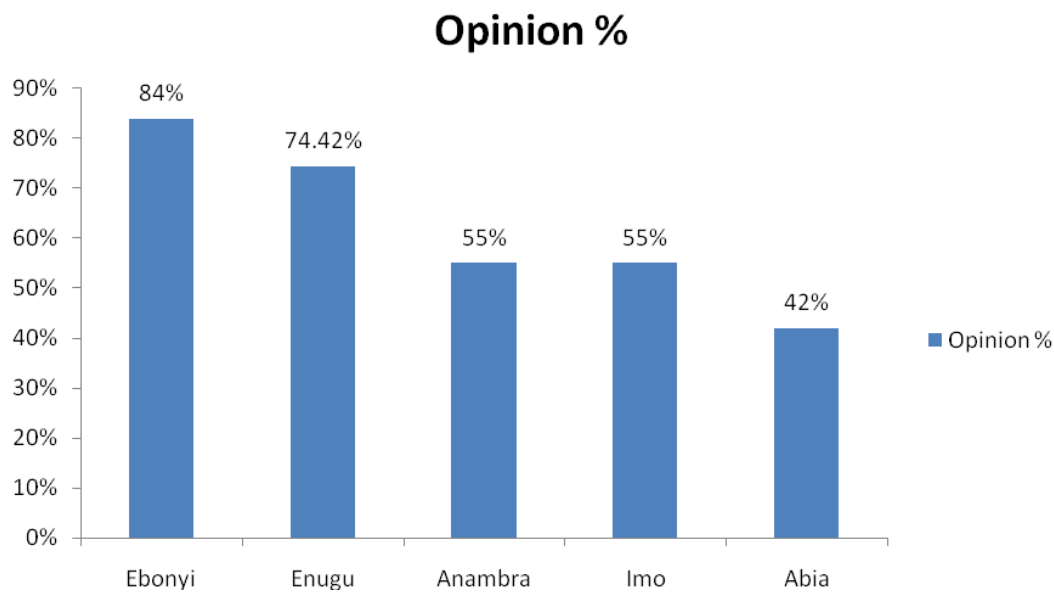
The differing viewpoints of various leaders align with the intelligence report compiled by the SBM Intelligence Agency through a survey in which significant percentages of respondents by state and by sector submitted that enforcement of the Sit-at-Home Order had serious effects on the productivity/economic activities of Southeast Nigeria. Tables 2 and 3 provide the expression of this submission.

Table 2: Intelligence Report on disruption to economic activity By IPOB's Sit-at-home in South-East Nigeria by States

| S/N | STATE | Percentage of Opinions |
|-----|---------|------------------------|
| 1 | Ebonyi | 84% |
| 2 | Enugu | 74.42% |
| 3 | Anambra | 55% |
| 4 | Imo | 55% |
| 5 | Abia | 42% |

Source: SBM Intelligence Report, 2021

Figure 1: Intelligence Report on disruption to economic activity By IPOB's Sit-at-home

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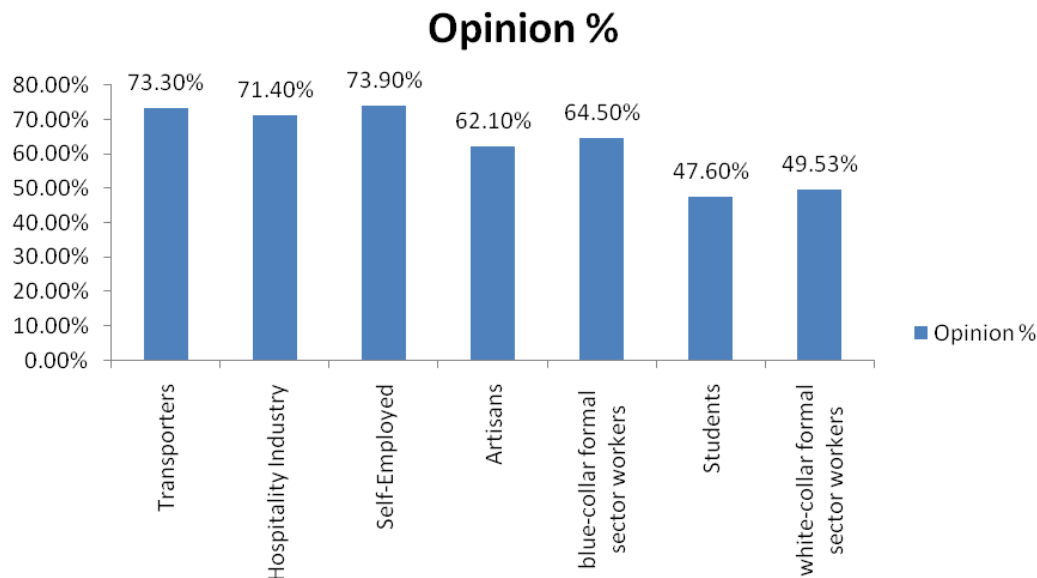
The intelligence report's opinion percentage on the disruption of economic activity caused by IPOB's Sit-at-Home Order in Southeast Nigeria's States is $255.425 \div 5 = 51.084\%$ (the sum of the percentages divided by 5 states), or almost 51%. Only the state of Abia, out of the five, has a lower opinion percentage than the national average; the percentages in the other four states are all higher. The claim stated by the opinion leaders in Table 1 that the Sit-at-Home project had a substantial influence on the economy of South East Nigeria is supported by this information.

Table 3: Intelligence Report on disruption to economic activity By IPOB's Sit-at-home in South-East Nigeria by Sector

| S/N | SECTOR | Percentage of Opinions |
|-----|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Transporters | 73.3% |
| 2 | Hospitality Industry | 71.4% |
| 3 | Self-Employed | 73.9% |
| 4 | Artisans | 62.1% |
| 5 | blue-collar formal sector workers | 64.5% |
| 6 | Students | 47.6% |
| 7 | white-collar formal sector workers | 49.53% |

Source: SBM Intelligence Report, 2021

Figure 1: Intelligence Report on disruption to economic activity By IPOB's Sit-at-home



Source: Derived from Table 3

The data in Table 3 and Figure 2 show that the average percentage for the various sectors is 442.337, or 63.19% (the total percentage of sectors divided by the seven sectors). Only three of the seven sectors—artists, students, and white-collar formal sector workers—were below the average of 63.19%; the other five—transporters, the hotel business, the self-employed, and blue-collar formal sector workers—are all above the average proportion of viewpoints. However, even among the Artisans, there was a higher-than-average response rate, indicating that more than 50% of respondents agreed. In conclusion, the compliance with and implementation of IPOB's sit-at-home order severely impacted the important economic sectors of the Southeast region, including trade and investment, locally generated income, and worker productivity.

4.1.1 Effects of IPOB Sit-At-Home Order on Trade and Investment

Trade and investment in southeast Nigeria suffered significantly as a result of the IPOB's Monday stay-at-home boycott. Okoye (2021) stated that as a result, the individuals in charge of executing the sit-at-home order accidentally inflicted a terrible blow on the southeast zone's trade, investments, investors, and investees. Sir Uchenna Okafor, the former Commissioner for Trade and Commerce under former Governor Willie Obiano, was quoted by Atupulazi (2021) as saying that most customers are now looking to other regions to source their goods because it is becoming more challenging to do business in the Southeast due to the ongoing sit-at-home strikes. Okafor stated in Atupulazi (2021), using Anambra State as an illustration, that once such people obtained what they wanted from Lagos or other regions, they would not go back to Anambra.

If they start to feel insecure in Anambra, they will keep going to places where they think they can conduct business without being harassed. The majority of our businesspeople, according to Okafor, who is mentioned in Atupulazi (2021), are moving to neighbouring states like Delta. As a state and region, we are spending a lot of money by staying put, which suggests that income and IGR will now be sent to Asaba (Atupulazi, 2021).

4.1.2 Effects of IPOB Sit-At-Home Order on Internally Generated Revenue

Notably, the Southeast Nigerian region loses money on every sit-at-home job in terms of internally generated revenue (IGR). Atupulazi (2021) quotes David Nweze Umahi, the governor of Ebonyi State and chairman of the South-East Governor's Forum, as denouncing the negative impact of the sit-at-home campaign on the economy of South East Nigeria. He claimed that every time we stay home, our economy loses over N10 billion.

We lost more than N610 billion between the beginning of the sit-at-home order on August 9th, 2021, and the expiration of the order on October 3rd, 2022, according to a macro-level extrapolation based on the submission of the Chairman of the South East Governor's Forum. The development has robbed the zone including Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States of over N50 billion so far (a period of 6 Mondays: 9th August to 13th September 2021); Chief Moses Ezukwo cited in Ogbonnaya, Nwosu and Ogbodo-Iwuagwu (2021) added that the loss in the private sector amounted to over 60 per cent out of which the transport sector losses at least N3 billion any day there is a lockdown in the region. This is based on the postulation that one million people enter and exit the southeast each day, costing on average N3,000 per traveller.

4.1.3 Effects of IPOB Sit-At-Home Order on Works and Transport

The Sit-at-Home has delt productivity in the industry in terms of Work and Transport for both "government workers" and "self-employed". Workers who choose to stay at home are prevented from engaging in any economic activity. As a result, they are unable to make any money. In addition to having a significant negative economic impact on the affected states, this also has a bad economic impact on the entire country. The IPOB's sit-at-home directive, meantime, prevents transporters from engaging in their transporting duties, which prevents them from earning any money to support their families. Since travel is typically available, persons who would have entered the zone for employment and economic activity are unable to do so, and those who would have left are likewise unable to do so.

The severity of "Ghost Monday" led Enugu state, for instance, to substitute "Saturday" for "Monday," which had been lost to stay-at-home activities, as a "working day."

SECTION FIVE

5.1 FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1.1 Findings

The findings of the study indicate that compliance with, and enforcement of:

1. The Sit-At-Home Order largely impeded “Trade and Investment” in South-East Nigeria.
2. The Sit-At-Home Order largely affected the Internally Generated Revenue of South-East Nigeria negatively to a large extent.
3. The Sit-At-Home Order affected the “Works and Transport Sectors” of South-East Nigeria to a great extent.

Conclusion

The analysis concludes that Southeast Nigeria's economy was harmed by the implementation and compliance with the IPOB's Sit-at-Home Order. Because of travel limitations and security risks, the sit-at-home policy initially hurt trade by discouraging investors from keeping their money in the zone. The domestic income of Southeast Nigeria was significantly harmed by stay-at-home days. The Sit-at-Home policy also had a significant negative impact on productivity in the transport and employment sectors as a result of people being unable to commute to their places of employment due to both transportation-related limitations and the general lack of security in the area, particularly on 'Ghost Mondays'.

Recommendations

The study recommends as follows:

- i. i. The proscription order against the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) in Nigeria needs to be loosened up with the organisation so that the sit-at-home order can also be loosened up in return for the gesture. This would significantly boost the start of commerce and investment operations on "Ghost Mondays".
- ii. There is a need for the government to initiate dialogue with the IPOB through the leadership of the Southeast states to harmonize ways of dousing tensions so that the economic activities that generate revenues for the Southeast states would be resuscitated.
- iii. The Governments of South-East Nigeria need to collaborate and guarantee security in the zone to ensure the safety of workers and transporters while productivity will be enhanced.

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